

Chicagoland Regional Team

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**Mobilizing leaders
and Churches in
God's Mission....
Together**

Healthy Congregations Workshop

These four hour sessions will help leaders to understand leadership in the local church in such a way as to enhance relationships with those who may oppose their leadership. Taking a look at the church as a system will open the leaders' eyes to how they function best in that local congregation, particularly when navigating change and the anxiety it brings.

The sessions are scheduled as follows:

January 15 - Creating Healthy Congregations
January 29 - Healthy Congregations Respond to Anxiety and Change
February 12 - Leadership in Healthy Congregations
February 26 - Relationships in Healthy Congregations

Each session runs from 11 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Peter Kelder, Ruth Kelder and Chris Yadron will facilitate the group. The cost is \$100 per participant.

This series uses video vignettes, case studies, conversations, notebooks and current research and experience in congregational life as a basis for learning that is thoughtful and interactive.

Peter Kelder, Regional Leader, will be happy to give you more information or answer your questions (815-690-2408; kelderp@crcna.org). Please register by contacting our administrative assistant, Cindy Wessels at tcwessels@juno.com

Welcome to the new CRWRC Midwest Church and Community Consultant

Bethany Dudley has an M. Div. in urban ministry, has been a lifelong member of the Presbyterian Church USA, and most recently was serving a church in Aurora, IL where she served in a community development role. Bethany joins the CRWRC North America team working towards community transformation in the Chicagoland area and parts of Indiana and Wisconsin. Her work will focus on growing the churches understanding and implementation of community development. This involves training/coaching in ABCD (Asset Based Community Development) principals, Communities First curriculum, community transformation, Biblical social justice, and communicating/ministering cross-culturally. Contact information: cwrccbethany@sbcglobal.net



Everyday Evangelism: Linking People to Jesus

Growing in a faith relationship with Christ is a journey that includes many linking experiences. This **new** training opportunity helps ordinary people understand how God can use them in ordinary life experiences as links in a chain that prepare another's heart for a life-changing commitment to Christ. This training has three modules which can be adjusted to meet your ministry's needs. It includes specific training in how we participate with God in mission by serving others, praying for others, inviting others to events, engaging in spiritual conversations, explaining the Christian faith, and helping someone make a faith commitment. For more information or to schedule a seminar, contact your Small Group Ministry Developer, Ruth Kelder at 815-280-5035 or kelderr@crcna.org.

February Focus: Regional Ministries

The Chicagoland Regional Team (Crosspoint Strategic Network) requests that the month of February, 2008, be a time to focus on Regional ministries. This month-long time of vision-casting and celebrating God's work in the region would give visibility to the work of the Regional Team. The request includes the taking of one offering for regional work sometime during February. This could be the beginning of an annual highlighting of regional initiatives.

In order to highlight regional ministry, the following are possible ideas to implement:

1. Choose one service for a missional focus during the month and highlight regional work.
2. Peter Kelder, Regional Leader, will be available to preach at one church service per church at their request.
3. Church planters from the region will be available to preach one service during the month at a church's request.
4. Offerings for regional work received
5. Invite testimonies resulting from *Crosspoint Prayers Initiative*.
6. Host an *Everyday Evangelism Training* through the regional team.
7. Highlight Coffee Break/Story Hour/Little Lamb ministries.
8. Host a prayer evangelism seminar with Al Vander Griend
9. Publish information about regional work as provided by the team
10. Invite a Regional Team member to share the vision and work in the region.
11. Host a Parenting Church seminar as a means to discern your church's role in church planting.
12. Inform congregation of newly developed regional web-site.
13. Begin promoting the Small Group and Evangelism conference to be held in Lombard, IL July 18-20, 2008
14. Publish information about the region's Leadership Development Network.
15. Invite our regional Small Group Ministry Developer to do some training on evangelistic small groups.

NOTE: If you'd like to invite Peter Kelder or a church planter to preach at one of your services in February, please contact:

Cindy Wessels
Administrative Assistant
tcwessels@juno.com
815-723-4527

Natural Church Development: A Strategy for Health

Imagine that you have set an appointment with your doctor for a physical. Afterwards, your doctor explains that in most respects you are a healthy individual, but there is one area, your blood pressure, that is of concern. He suggests a couple of things that will help with that and closes the conversations by saying, if we ignore this, it could kill you!

The Natural Church Development Survey could be described in similar ways. It is very helpful in identifying strengths in eight key ministry areas; it is also able to pinpoint areas where growth and development are necessary. Any of these eight key ministry areas, if ignored could have a detrimental effect on the church and its health.

The survey itself is completed by 30 leaders in the church and then scored by computer. The church receives a report on the results to assist them in self-assessment. The "minimum factor" is identified and a ministry development plan in one or more of those areas is designed. It allows a church to focus on areas of growth that have been identified and make specific action plans with regards to those plans.

I (Peter Kelder) have been trained and certified as a coach of Natural Church Development. It would be a privilege to help you navigate this process and follow up with specific growth plans. Our Regional Team work plans include having a number of churches in the region (perhaps 6-12) lead the way by participating in NCD every other year and monitoring the development of ministry areas. The results would become a resource for the Classes in learning about this and encouraging other churches to participate in NCD. Our work plan includes forming peer groups for churches in the eight ministry areas, for example, in need-oriented evangelism, and have 5-6 churches around the table to discern and help one another with next steps in evangelism. The results could be exciting!

If you would like more information about this or would like to schedule NCD for your church, please contact Peter Kelder at 815-690-2408 or kelderp@crcna.org.



and networking with leaders from across the continent. Save the date, for now, and watch for more information.

2008 Small Group and Evangelism Conference will be held right here in our own backyard! The Westin Hotel in Lombard will be where the 14th biennial Home Missions sponsored event will take place on July 18 – 20. Its goal is to equip, challenge and encourage leaders involved in small group and evangelism ministries. Participants will be challenged through plenary and break-out speakers, times of worship,

CHICAGO URBAN CLUSTER

Urban growth has become the missionary challenge of our time. Back in 1800, only 3% of the population lived in cities. By the year 2000, that figure grew dramatically to over 50% living in cities. Projections now are that within fifty years, 70% of the world's population will reside in the cities. Chicago is a global crossroads and a prime location for a church planting movement.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote, in reference to this subject. "...seek the peace and prosperity of the city...pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." Jeremiah 29:7 The apostle Paul, in his strategy to spread the good news, went from city to city-Corinth, Ephesus, Colossae, Philippi, Thessalonica, and even to Rome. His letter to the mission outposts in those places comprise much of the New Testament Bible.

What might happen if those who reside and work in the city became strongly committed to Christ, impacting the city? What if typically secular pursuits were exchanged for faith-filled initiatives that transformed the community? How can this happen? What is needed is a cluster of church plants that are sharing God's grace, seeking His Kingdom, serving the poor, and transforming lives and the city to be a place of unity and restoration, where the cities prosper and all things serve to enhance the community in which we live. A cluster of churches, particularly new church plants, can be the most effective evangelistic method known to us. It would be the best way to reach young adults; it would be the best way to reach new residents; it would be the best way to reach new people groups and ethnic groups; and it would be the best way to reach the unchurched....period!

For this to happen we need to recruit church planters. They will need to be effective communicators, pastoral and relational persons, and exhibit leadership qualities. More importantly, they will need servant hearts and expect the unexpected as they see God moving. As indigenous leaders are raised up for this task, the challenge will be to remain context-sensitive and open to always planning where the next church plant will be planted.

Our goal would be to begin ten new churches in the city over the next ten years. As these churches multiply and reproduce, a cluster of congregations can emerge. The goal includes partnering with other denominations to help build momentum and partnership in the gospel.

The cost will be huge – we will need givers and servants willing to help in any way. But think about what God might do – and we get to participate with Him in what He is doing – in the city!